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Life Eternal

BY FREDERICK W. NORWOOD

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. John 17:3.

MANY people feel that they do not know how to think of God. They can form no clear concept of him, they can achieve no imaginative likeness which is adequate and satisfying. They dare not think of him in human form as their ancestors did—with considerable advantage, though with much disadvantage. When they think of him as Spirit they are distressed by the vagueness of their thought.

They conclude by saying that God is the supreme mystery, which is true, but if it be the whole truth, then it robs religion of its deepest and most practical significance. We are intrigued by mystery, but not inspired by it. It is at best a mood of the mind. There are moods when mystery is inspiring. There are surely moods in worship when we are exalted by the mystery of God, but there are experiences in daily life when we are driven to the point of despair by the insoluble mystery of God.

We feel that we ought to be inspired of God. We feel that we ought to know God, and not merely guess about him. We feel that we ought to love God, but how can we love the unknown or inexplicable? It seems like an impasse; and it is an impasse to the intellect. But the strange thing is, it never has been quite an impasse. God has been, and is, and always will be, the greatest Fact in human experience. Apparently we know God better than we think. We know him much more vitally than we can explain.

We sometimes say one can know God only by faith; which again is true, but even faith requires some intellectual quality. We turn our eyes upon Jesus, millions of people do, and feel that somehow he is the link between man and God. Millions of people have felt that about him and still feel it. Indeed, it would be true to say that it is Jesus who gives to millions of people the

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quality of their religion. He causes them to be distinguished by a certain attitude toward life, by certain kinds of valuation in life which the mere thought of God would not have done. But then, if we were forced to think that God was in the flesh only once, how remote seems that point and how minute seems that demonstration.

We all of us know, even when we give to Jesus the supreme place in our faith, how difficult it is to relate our actual experiences and daily problems to that one solitary life among the myriads of lives. It involves so much theology and so much history that we long for some assurance of God, more spontaneous and more immediately applicable. Besides, if our faith in God is inseparable from the historic Christ, we are always assaulted by doubts. Let there be one doubt about the divinity of Jesus, and all our system trembles.

One wonders how Jesus himself thought of God. You would say, perhaps, that he thought of him as Father and that is obviously true. But did he visualize him as Father in any terms that seem applicable to human fatherhood? Surely not. He believed that God was the Life-Giver, Life-Sustainer, Life-Fulfiller, and that at the heart of all things was all that is best in fatherhood. But it is naïve to think that Jesus thought of God under a concrete image, so to speak, of an earthly father.

It seems to me that there was one word incessantly upon the lips of Jesus that surely gives us some insight into his thought, and that is the word "life." We have it here in the text, "This is life eternal that they might know thee." Profound words, surely, that keep us pondering over their depths. This saying almost seems to convey the suggestion that the life eternal and God are identical. "This is life eternal, to know God." "To know God is to have life eternal." "To know life eternal is to know God." *God is life!*

THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS

Once we have grasped that thought we perceive how constantly this word was upon the lips of Jesus. "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." So said the great evangelist who surely understood him best. "I am the bread of life." "I give my life for the world." "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

Here is obviously the meaning of the Sermon on the Mount. "Is not the life more than meat or than raiment?" It is the only way I can understand the Sermon on the Mount. That great pronouncement is plain common sense if your values in life are what those of Jesus were, otherwise it is unconvincing. It is better to offer the other cheek and preserve the quality of your life than to smite back and depreciate your life. It is better to live with the abandon of the birds of the air or to exalt in the beauty of the lily of the field if your values of life are high enough. It is better to love even your enemy, if your conception of the quality of your own life is sufficiently high.

I find Jesus entirely absorbed by a conception and an experience of life which was full at the flood, and which was eternal. That accounts for some of his strange, and even forbidding, sayings. "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off. If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out." It is better to *enter into life* maimed than, keeping yourself intact, depreciate life's quality. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his life?" It does not matter whether you read that as "life" or "soul." In the simpler language of the New Testament the words are almost interchangeable. I like the simple word myself provided you give it the value it had for Jesus. Life—but do not think of life in terms of that brief period between the cradle and the grave. He thought of it in terms of eternity; he thought of it in terms of superlative quality. "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

GOD IS LIFE!

Do you not see how this conception of life dominated Jesus? "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given unto the Son to have life in himself."

I think Jesus thought of God as Life, life eternal. I myself think of God as Life. I cannot construct an image of God or shape a mental concept. To have an objective God means idolatry or skepticism. We want a simple word that yet is real. I give it to you: God is Life. Simple, did I say? I do not mean without mystery; there is nothing so simple as not to be mysterious; a blade of grass is both of those.

There is nothing more mysterious than life; but it is familiar, we are at home with it, it is the one thing we are sure of in the world, life! Even the man who denies the objective existence of God, cannot deny his own life. Even the man who thinks of the whole universe as illusion, cannot think of himself except in terms of reality. You cannot make an image of life. You know some of the forms of its manifestation—your own form, for instance. There are lower forms than yours, the animals; there are higher forms doubtless, the angels. Indeed, you do not know where to stop, for there are flowers and there are trees, and you do not know if you may stop then, for the whole universe is at least force, and may not force be life? Do you want to think of God in terms of reality? Then think of him as Life.

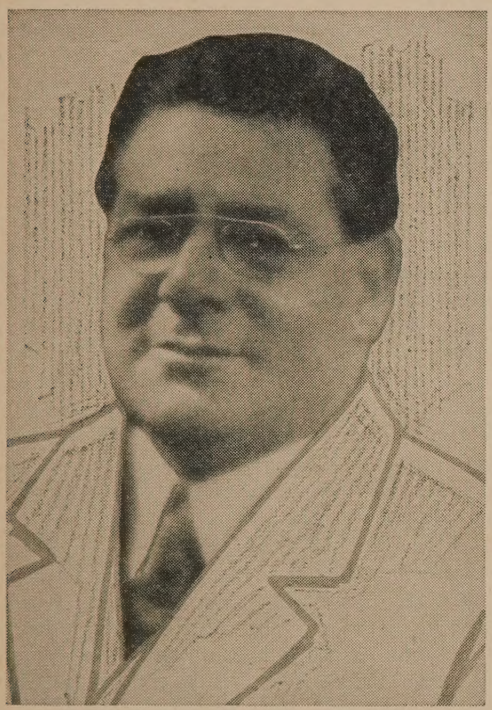
God is Life. Life flows in upon me. Man receives life, but man does not give it. Life itself is the giver. It flows in at birth, it flows out at death, but it did not begin at the one, and it does not end at the other. It is eternal, it is all-pervasive. God is life, the life of all things. His life is manifested in myriads of forms, manifested everywhere, I think. I do not think there is a clod of mud that does not manifest the life of God. I do not think there is a flower, or a plant, or a bird upon the wing, or a cloud drifting in the sky, or a lowly creature of the water or of the forest that does not manifest the life of God under one at least of its innumerable phases. God is life!

Life must be judged qualitatively and not only quantitatively.

I have a life of the body. It is a manifestation of God's life, but it is like a river whose waters roll on their way full of sediment. I want to filter that mixed stream within my mind and behold its essential qualities in their limpid purity, not clogged and stained with the soil along its banks. In the realm of my mind, I want

the waters to be refined, so that they give off, so to speak, their vapor, passing upward into the unseen and entering into the realm of the spirit. The higher I go, the more I may soar into the life of God.

For life may proceed upon low levels or it may climb upward to high levels, and if I believe that God is life, then I am bound to seek for quality. That is why I love truth better than a lie. It is not a matter of expediency, it is a matter of quality. A lie may make me rich, it may make me secure, it may even make me happy, but I cannot respect it, and I cannot be satisfied with it. I want the truth, though I die for it. I want the truth, though I am afraid to die for it. I want the truth, though I deny it. I am built that way; so are you, if you are true



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to yourself. If you believe that God is love, and are true to your own highest values, quality becomes more than quantity. Life eternal is not merely life long-drawn-out, it is life made full.

In the realm of morals I value righteousness, that is if I am true to myself. There are times when righteousness does not pay me. There are times when I stoop to the unrighteous because it is easier and safer, and it may be pleasanter, but then, while I stoop, I loathe myself for stooping. I value righteousness, value it even though I cannot reach it, value it even if I deny it, value it even if, like Judas, I sell it. I may come back like Judas and prefer to die because I hate myself for selling it.

I value love more than anything else, more than wealth, more than power, more than fame, more than happiness. Love! Oh, I may fall short of it. I may deny it. I may trade it, but even while I am doing it I know that my real quality is shrunken, I am not so much alive as when I loved.

God is Life. You say to me, how shall I know God? How shall I think of God? I think I can answer you in one word, at least I can to myself, *live!* Most of us do not live, we are just alive. We do not really live because we do not believe in our own best values. We say: "Oh, I cannot, it is too difficult, it is too intricate in this mundane world." We do not believe in our own best values and therefore we do not really live.

Most people, when they think about living, think of something else they want. When a man says "I want to know life," he means he wants a lot more things that he can take to himself and use. He wants a lot more safety. He is very uneasy just now, things are so bad, conditions so uncertain. He feels sure he would have more life if he had more security. He wants more for himself, even if he takes it from his neighbor, and that is about the bottom sin in the world. We take from our neighbors to increase our own life, and we wonder why it is that we seem to have shriveled up inside. Somehow we have more things, but we have less life.

GO AND LIVE!

Do you not see? Go and *live.* If you want to know God, live, live at your best, live at your highest, trust your highest. God is Life.

That is the real test of values with regard to Jesus Christ. He is not preeminently the Son of God because he was born of a virgin. He may have been, he may not have been. At least equally intelligent and reverent men hold differing opinions. He is not preeminently the Son of God because he rose from the dead. He may have done so; I believe he did, with all my soul, but if you ask me to explain it I cannot. I think I would not explain it in mere terms of the resuscitation of a dead body. I do not know where to find the boundary line between the things of the flesh and the things of the spirit. I believe Christ lives! He lives forever. He could not die. He knew he could not die. He did not go up on the cross to die, he went up there to live. He had such a grip upon the life of God that he knew men could not stop it, could not dam it up, could not pervert it. He knew he was eternal, because to him God was life. "He is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

In the last analysis we believe in Jesus Christ as every man must believe who tries to adopt his values, because he is the Way and the Truth and the *Life.*

This is life eternal, to know God. This is God, to share in the life eternal. This pulsing, quenchless, vivifying power that flows through all things, flows through the lower creatures as well as through ourselves, flows through our neighbors as well as through ourselves, makes all the world one, makes all men one.

These frontiers of ours, these class sections, and all the rest, they are man-made barriers. The soul is international, the soul is just Man in God!

I love the Lord Jesus Christ and I believe in him and will try to walk with him till I die, though I stumble oft and fail bitterly, because I know, whenever my sense of values is true, he is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Did you say you cannot think of God because your mind has no satisfying concept? You have no image of Life, but you have it, and you know it. The life more abundant and richer in quality—that is God. When its wealth flowers in love, you are in God, and God is in

you. Life Eternal is God. God is Life Eternal. It, or he, is flowing through you now. Let it flow more freely, more purely, and the river is entering the Sea. "This life" manifestly takes on the qualities of Life Eternal.

The Nature of Eternal Life

By Carl Knudsen

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. John 17:3.

THERE is an enchanting little story, which Lynn Harold Hough likes to quote, called "The Wonderful Window." It is the tale of a London clerk, working in drab and depressing surroundings, who bought a mysterious oriental window and installed it high in his office work room. Looking through this window the hard driven and spiritless clerk saw not the familiar scenes of slums, sunless streets, dingy marts and surly men, which had all but overwhelmed his soul. He saw instead a fairy city with beautiful castles and towers, green parks, wide streets, lovely homes and happy people. On the highest tower there was a large white banner with a sturdy knight protecting the fair city from a fierce dragon of degeneracy and wrong. This wonderful window put a halo of glory on the everyday task for the young man of London town. Somehow he felt, as he added his long column of figures and painfully tried to make accounts balance as they should, that he was working for that knight on the banner. Into his soul there came a sense of glamor and beauty. His part was to help the knight keep the city happy and beautiful and prosperous and strong.

A HEAVENLY VISION

The story of Easter is the story of God's wonderful window of divine surprise. Two disciples of Jesus were walking from Emmaus to Jerusalem, a distance of about seven and one-half miles. Their hearts were heavy. Their trust had been placed in Jesus as one who should redeem Israel. They had followed him from place to place, they had felt the refreshing tonic of his vibrant personality, they had seen in him a prophet mighty in deed and godlike in heart and in spirit. They had mingled silently in the mob during the mock trial before Pilate. To the last they had believed that such a one as he could not be crucified by ordinary men. Even after Jesus had been forced to carry his cross, even after he had been nailed to its beams, they had still hoped against hope that some miracle would happen and that Jesus would be the undisputed and sovereign leader of the Jews. But the very worst had come to pass. Jesus was dead. Their hopes had vanished like a beautiful dream. After all, the universe seemed to be on the side of wrong. What was there left to live for? The whole world was now a slum district to them. The sun had gone out of their skies, the stars were no more to be seen in the heavens, the flowers had lost their fragrance, even the daytime seemed like midnight to their despairing souls.

While they communed together, however, Jesus himself drew near. "What manner of conversation is this as ye walk and are sad?" he asked them with a sympathetic and reassuring note in his voice.

They then told of their heartbreak. They had heard a report from certain women that at the sepulcher had been seen an angel who said that he was alive. Hurrying to the sepulcher, they found it empty, the stone having been rolled away. But Jesus they saw not.

Then their strange visitor spoke with amazing familiarity of the appearance of Jesus in the world, beginning with Moses and the prophets and expounding all things concerning the Savior. To their home came the company, their comforting stranger-companion joining them in their evening meal. They instinctively looked to him as a spiritual leader in their hour of despair. He blessed their bread and gave it to them. Then, we are told, "their eyes were opened and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight."

IS IMMORTALITY DESIRABLE?

This experience, which came in various ways to all the disciples, performed a wondrous miracle in the lives of simple men. It was as if they looked at life through a wonderful window, seeing an unconquerable knight protecting the world against the dragon of wrong. Whatever the material conditions of their world might be, from now on they saw beyond this world into a Holy City. From now on they served the Supreme Knight of the world, Jesus the Risen Christ. Life would go on as before except for the blessed assurance that, for the sons of God, spiritual life is as everlasting as the stars and as eternal as God. Their discovery was not important merely because of a new faith in the future life. They already believed that their souls were somehow destined for eternity. Their discovery was important because of the nature of the eternal life which it revealed. Jesus had not passed on to a world far beyond the ken of mortal man. Jesus was among men as a living presence. Their work would go right on. The fellowship of spiritual minds was indestructible. Their lives were already eternal. They were already tasting the glories of the world to come!

This story of Easter speaks directly to the mood of our time. For men are not questioning the possibility of immortality. We live in a world of miracle. We declare that a God who can create this world can create another world. We say that life itself is a miracle. And a God who can create a body for the spirit on this earth can create a body for the spirit in the world to come. Men are asking rather: Is immortality desirable?

This question arises from two important sources. One is the dissatisfaction with the traditional ideas of heaven. These ideas have forecast either a rest home or a conservatory of music. Either of these would become unbearably monotonous. As one man says, we would like good music but our heaven would depend more upon the musician. What would the music maker do if we asked him to move along? In other words, human relations have more to do with our idea of heaven than do celestial symphonies. The other source of interest in

the desirability, or undesirability, of another life is skepticism concerning the worth of life as we now know it. Wars and rumors of wars, economic tragedy, interracial brutality and increasing nervous tension attendant upon modern "civilization" have greatly reduced the proportion of people who derive any genuine joy from living. It thus becomes increasingly difficult for many people to visualize a desirable immortality. What can the Christian say to a world like this?

Jesus declares, in the first place, that the clues to the nature of eternal life are discoverable in the here and now. One striking feature of Jesus' discussion of immortality is that it is couched in the present tense. "This *is* life eternal," he says, "to know thee, the only true

Carl Knudsen

God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." And "Verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on him that sent me *hath* everlasting life and *is* passed from death unto life."

"Immortality is not some destiny conferred from without," says R. H. Murray, "but the flower of fruitage which must be developed from within." Again he declares: "It is not like the gift of knighthood as when a man kneels before a royal sovereign, a plebeian, and at the touch of a sword rises an aristocrat, a titled gentleman. It is the life of Christ in the soul, blushing with imperishable youth." Richter has the same idea when he says: "We desire immortality, not as a reward of virtue, but as its continuance."

The story is told of certain sailors who were near death with thirst. Ocean water being worse than no water at all, they were like the Ancient Mariner who moaned, "Water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink." Soon they met a boat and, overjoyed, asked the sailors for a drink of fresh water. Their new companions, surprised at their request, told them to lower their buckets and help themselves. The mariners had thought that they were in the open ocean. As a matter of fact they were at least a mile up the Amazon river. Eternal life is often conceived as something far off. Jesus thought of it as something which we may taste here and now. Its resources are all around us, not on some distant shore.

The old idea of an American was one who had taken out his naturalization papers. We now realize that a man may be an American long before he is awarded these coveted certificates. He is an American as soon as he is in love with the American spirit and begins to serve the best interests of this nation. Likewise, we need not wait until we leave this earth before we know eternal life. We already have eternal life if we cherish eternal values in our hearts.

It is quality then, rather than quantity, that defines eternal life. "To be carnally minded *is* death," said Paul, "but to be spiritually minded *is* life." There is something obviously eternal about a life that is devoted not to things of the flesh but to things of the spirit. It is not difficult to imagine death for the brontosaurus, a Mesozoic reptile, weighing thirty-seven tons, but having only a two-pound brain. If the proportion of body to mind is as one ounce to a ton and the animal acts accordingly, we have no trouble in consigning the creature to degeneration and decay.

RESOURCES OF IMMORTALITY ALL ABOUT US

Likewise, mere quantity of life such as some people live it, is of all things most undesirable. If a man's chief interest is in material plenty or physical satisfaction, we feel that he dies with little accumulation of values that are transmissible to a spirit world. If a woman's chief interest is pleasure or popularity or something else which is superficial, we find it incongruous to picture her as a comfortable inhabitant of a God-centered eternity. It is only when material plenty or mere pleasure takes a subordinate place in a life devoted to higher values that we can see the everlasting qualities of life.

"Immortality of love and love of immortality go together," says a modern thinker. The chief question is not concerned with a mysterious future but with a glorious present. Thus John Baillie in his classic book, "The Life Everlasting," asks this question: "Are we alive now with a spiritual vitality which is free from the vicissitudes of the body and which has the quality of timelessness? If we answer in the affirmative, we need not to be persuaded that immortality is desirable. "The quality of Jesus' life made his Easter appearances probable. It was not their faith in his appearances that gave men faith in Jesus, but their faith in Jesus which made his appearances seem probable." These words of Professor Baillie's remind us of Emerson's famous lines:

> The verdict which accumulates
> From lengthening scrolls of human fates,
> Saying, what is excellent
> As God lives is permanent.

Eternal life becomes not only desirable but highly intriguing when we remember that the qualities of life that are "excellent," and therefore "permanent," are

capable of indefinite growth. We grant that life cannot be short enough for people who are aware only of pursuits that quickly run their course and very early envelop them in the mildew of monotony. But in most of us there lies dormant a glimpse of the infinite sea. We see a glimmer of certain values that require eternity for their exploration and enjoyment. We have moods when with Elizabeth Barrett Browning we sing:

That which in thy restless bosom ever paints the joys to be
Is but the faint foreshadowing of what thou shalt one day see.

Life is most interesting to people who have won their first view of that world which lies beyond this world of knowledge, truth and adventure. It must have been zestful to Beethoven who after producing one of his compositions said: "My ninth symphony is but an empty echo of the heavenly music I heard in my dream." Or to Raphael who after painting the Sistine Madonna complained that he could not put on canvas the vision which his soul saw. Or to Isaac Newton who after his epoch-making scientific discoveries testified: "I seem to have been like a boy playing on the seashore while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

ON THE TRAIL OF ETERNAL LIFE

But what of us lesser mortals? "Oh, for a hundred years more!" cried Humboldt, famous scientist, on his deathbed. But we are not great explorers of the universe! The only difference is that we need more of eternity even to reach the starting place of the great. We haven't even begun to explore the surface of the material and the spiritual world. Grey's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" reminds us of the unknown dreams, the unrevealed greatness, the suppressed genius that has been screened from the world and that will require eternity for expression and completion.

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre;

Some village tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute, inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood. . . .

What are some of these interests that are inexhaustible, that have no horizons, that send us on the trail of eternal life? The search for truth is certainly one. Malebranche exclaimed: "If I held truth captive in my hand, I should open my hand and let it fly, in order that I might again pursue it and capture it." A genuine search for truth culminates in a confession of relative ignorance, opening ever new panoramas for research and adventure. It gives the soul expectancy, persistence and eagerness to search for that which lies beyond all fragmentary truths discernible here.

In expressing his scorn of immortality George Bernard Shaw missed this whole point concerning the place of growth. He admitted that it would be a "dreadful calamity to have this thing named Shaw go on forever pouring out plays by the hundreds and writing books by the score." Many will agree that such would be a calamity unless "this thing named Shaw" improved in vision, depth and outlook, and even in faith. But the likelihood is that he would improve and that his very improvement would give him a new and strange desire for immortality.

FELLOWSHIP CALLS FOR ETERNITY

Friendship is another factor in eternal life. It is only those who are unable to envision such friendship except in terms of material advantage or sensual satisfaction who grow weary of the prospect of eternal fellowship with others. An aged couple who have learned to love each other for personal qualities and not for physical charm or excitement, which are bound to fade, are on the trail of eternal life. I think of one such couple. He takes a keen interest in her handiwork, delights in her company, chuckles over her stories, recounts their years of association, and enjoys a relationship sanctified on the altar of those common experiences of sorrow and disappointment, happiness and success, failure and triumph. Such friendship grows richer with every new experience. Its possibilities are infinite when there is present a common faith in the everlasting God. Such faith adds anticipation to the joys of retrospection and looks at death as a portal rather than as a dead-end street.

Service to others is another quality that knows no boundary lines, that is capable of unending growth and ever widening possibilities. At one end of the scale is the man who serves others only in a conventional manner. At the other is the man who takes all the burdens of the world on his heart and feels responsible for the welfare of his most distant neighbor. Such a spirit of service has eternity in its very nature, for the higher we ascend in the realm of moral greatness, the more sensitive is our conscience and the more refined our sense of right and wrong. After our Christmas baskets are passed out to the poor we are not satisfied as we had hoped to be. We begin to condemn the social system that creates conditions that call for Christmas baskets. Then we find ourselves guilty of collusion in that very system. If we are still growing we are "driven by the spirit" to go out to fight and sacrifice for a more Christ-like world. The endlessness of this fight and this sacrifice soon becomes apparent unto us.

The wonderful window through which we envision the will of God always admits new light on the adventurous way of life. Lowell sees eternity in the same category of endless service, as he writes:

Thou art not idle in thy higher sphere,
Thy spirit bends itself to lowly tasks.
And strength to perfect what it dreamed of here
Is all the crown and glory that it asks.

There can be only one logical conclusion to this philosophy of life. "If ye are risen with Christ seek those things that are above." Why fritter away our existence in aimless and valueless pursuits if we can feed the deep springs of eternal life and live on the heights? Rufus Jones goes so far as to say that "hell consists only in being eternally what you are." Are we satisfied with what we are? Then we are preparing for an extremely uncomfortable and distressing existence in the future. But heaven is growth in the love

for truth, in the capacity for higher fellowship, in love for God and service to man. Why not, then, break away from our aboriginal bondage to the physical, to the selfish, to the narrow satisfactions and begin to live the life of quality and of spiritual enhancement?

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, in her book "A Singular Life," tells of a young Christian who lived here in New England and tried in simple common ways to be of help to people and to win them to the Christian life. One day he risked his life to save a drunken sailor from drowning. When the young mariner, suddenly sobered, was able to speak, he said, "I'm not worth saving." The stalwart young man towering over him looked directly into his bleary eyes and said with an earnestness that seemed to penetrate to the sailor's very heart: "Why not say that you will be worth saving?" It is said that the sailor looked through wonderful windows after that day and that something strangely different took possession of his life.

The story of the Risen Lord speaking to the troubled hearts of the disciples on the way to Emmaus is a direct challenge to us across the ages. It seems too much that Christ should have died for ordinary people like us. It is natural that we should be humble. But it is also natural that we should rise to the high estate to which we are called. It is natural that we should begin this very day to be worthy of eternal life, to lay hold on those values which are immortal because they are akin to the spirit of the Risen Christ.

A Great Scientist on Immortality

In spite of his physical insignificance, man as an intelligent person is of extraordinary importance in the cosmic scheme. If we were to use our own best judgment, what would we say is the most important thing about a noble man? Would it be the strength of his body, or the brilliance of his intellect? Would we not place first the beauty of his character? A man's body is at its prime before middle life, and his intellect probably somewhat after middle life. But it takes a whole lifetime to build the character of a noble man. The exercise and discipline of youth, the struggles and failures and successes, the pains and pleasures of maturity, the loneliness and tranquillity of age—these make up the fire through which he must pass to bring out the pure gold of his soul. Having been thus perfected, what shall Nature do with him? Annihilate him? What infinite waste.

Speaking, now, not as a scientist but as man to man, how can a father who loves his children choose to have them die? As long as there is in heaven a God of love, there must be for God's children everlasting life. This is not the cold logic of science but the warm faith of a father who has seen his child on the brink of death.

> And so at last, it may be you and I
> In some far azure Infinity
> Shall find together some enchanted shore
> Where Life and Death and Time shall be no more
> Leaving Love only and Eternity.

Arthur H. Compton,
Professor of Physics, University of Chicago.

Intimations of Immortaliy

By Norman Vincent Peale

If it were not so, I would have told you. John 14:2.

IT IS NOT my purpose in this sermon to attempt to prove the thesis of immortality. I cannot prove it to you any more than another can disprove it. There is no method by which it can be either proved or disproved. I can, to be sure, marshal the philosophical, metaphysical and theological arguments in its favor and these arguments very clearly outweigh the arguments against, but if you doubt immortality, all the logic one might summon to its support would fail to convince you. But I can say that I have proved it to myself. I believe in immortality with a strong and steady conviction. I believe that when my loved ones pass into the great beyond, I shall see them again.

A minister friend tells me that the most eloquent address he ever heard was delivered by that eccentric but great preacher of other years, Sam Jones. It had as its title "Why I Believe in Immortality." In the course of the address Mr. Jones turned most impressively to tell of the day his mother died. He was but a lad. The loss of a mother to a boy in all its poignant anguish broke over his soul. That sorrow lingered with him throughout a lifetime. In his sermon, delivered forty years later, he said something like this: "My mother has been buried under the sod of Alabama for forty years. If I were to go down there tomorrow and gently lift the earth off her precious body and disinter her bones, I suppose I could gather all there is of her in my two hands, and as I would stand there, looking at that handful of dirt and mold, I would say, 'Great God, is that all that is left of my precious mother?' And there, with such pitiful evidences of dust to dust, ashes to ashes, earth to earth, would come resounding this great message of our faith: This corruption shall put on incorruption and this mortal shall put on immortality." And still holding that handful of clay, he said he would lift up his eyes on high and say, "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

HEART OF MAN, HEART OF GOD

Only you can prove immortality to yourself, for it is not a demonstration nor a proposition. It is, and must forever be, a deep conviction or instinct. "The faith of immortality," says Horace Bushnell, "depends upon a sense of it begotten and not an argument for it concluded." Martineau, with penetrative insight, declares: "We do not believe in immortality because we can prove it, but we try to prove it because we cannot help believing it."

I can tell you, however, how to prove it to yourself. There are two things you must do. The first is to look deeply into the soul of man, not man as he appears to be but man as he is in his heart; the second is to get near to the heart of God.

When one examines the human heart at close range, one becomes aware of a greatness and a fundamental

goodness. Superficially observing man makes apparent his many imperfections but a deeper study reveals a grandeur which Emmanuel Kant said filled him with constantly increasing admiration and awe so that he compared the inner worth of man to the glory of the starry heavens.

Surely, also, no writer ever knew men with such sure instinct as Shakespeare. The bard of Avon is the supreme literary genius of the world because of his uncanny knowledge of man, not as he appears to be but as he is. He pays man this tribute: "What a piece of work is man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god—the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals!"

Looking at man in this manner we shall surely find ourselves in agreement with the modern poet, John Oxenham—

> In every soul of all mankind
> Somewhat of Christ I find,
> Somewhat of Christ—and Thee;
> For in each one there surely dwells
> That something which most surely spells
> Life's immortality.

The second way to prove immortality to yourself is to crawl up close against the heart of God. As the awful negatives, sickening doubts, fear of death, fear of losing loved ones come like dismal fog into your soul, crawl into his arms, look up into his face and you will know. Long ago when I was a little fellow, with my father and mother I was on the old Ohio river boat, "The Island Queen," coming at night into her dock. It was a stormy night and some confusion had arisen in warping the boat into her pier, which sent that strange and indefinable thing, a panic, through the people. The tense atmosphere, the storm clouds, the lightning—all combined to put fear into the heart of a little boy. I looked over the side of the vessel, down to the dark swirling waters, and was afraid. I can remember even now, with healing comfort, snuggling close up against the side of my father and looking into his face; whereupon he smiled confidently at me and I was no longer afraid. In similar manner, as our little craft makes its way over the stormy sea of life and as we feel the mist in our faces and know we are nearing the place, like Browning in "Paracelsus" one may say:

> If I stoop
> Into a dark tremendous sea of cloud,
> It is but for a time; I press God's lamp
> Close to my breast; its splendor, soon or late,
> Will pierce the gloom; I shall emerge one day.

WHERE SCIENCE FAILS

As the veteran pilot can hear the far-off sound of bells above the storm, which others cannot discern, so he who knows the ways of God and man can catch intimations of eternal coastlines.

Thus he who has looked deeply into the heart of man and God may not, it is true, understand all, but he has caught reflections, foretokens, intimations of immortality. It is unwise, for the reason that it is futile, to approach this matter scientifically. In the first place, it is out of the realm of science; it is a beyond-science question. It is beyond science because science deals and can deal only with the facts of the physical world which can be measured, weighed, accurately observed and classified. The fact of immortality belongs not to the natural sciences but to philosophy and religion. Moreover, scientific considerations for or against belief in immortality are practically meaningless. Psychical research, it is true, tries to point out verifiable testimony but the evidence advanced is scanty at best and unreliable. Nor should we give much consideration to scientific disproofs of immortality, for usually they are not worth the paper they are written on. The simple fact is that science has no data, for it is dealing with what Shakespeare called "that undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveler has ever returned."

GREAT MEN ON IMMORTALITY

When we approach this question from the purely scientific point of view, the best we can do is to balance one set of evidence against the other and then deduce what we will—which, of course, leads us instantly back into the region of faith. It might be remembered that science itself depends upon intimations, inspirations, even faith, for, as Lord Kelvin told us long ago, when the scientist comes to the end of demonstration, he must take what he calls a mortal leap to come finally to truth. Thus, if in scientific inquiry the gleam of intimations leads the scientist on, so may we in this field have confidence in the validity and accuracy of our intimations of immortality. Thus, Lowell, in "The Cathedral," is dealing with sound doctrine when he exclaims, "We sometimes have intimations clear of wider scope, hints of occasions infinite."

The validity of the intimations of immortality is attested by the notable people who have felt them. The finest minds and most sensitive souls among us have followed this instinct of immortality with a childlike faith. John Morley waves a gallant farewell as he concludes his "Book of Recollections" with these words, "So to my home and in the falling twilight." To what home did he refer? Surely no other than that promised by Jesus—"I go to prepare a place for you."

Tennyson, one of the finest souls of our Anglo-Saxon race, calls out in faith:

> Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
> Thou madest man, he knows not why,
> He thinks he was not made to die;
> And Thou hast made him; Thou art just.

Robert Louis Stevenson, that joyous and eternally youthful spirit despite his long battle with the medicine bottle, awaits the touch of death in his island in the Pacific with these brave words:

> The breeze from the embalmed land
> Blows sudden toward the shore
> And claps my cottage door . . .
> I hear the signal, Lord,
> I understand;
> The night at thy command
> Comes;
> I will eat and sleep,
> And will not question more.

Even Robert G. Ingersoll gave expression to a heart-deep faith in immortality when, standing by the body of his dead brother he said: "Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights; we cry aloud and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word; but in the night of death hope sees a star and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing."

Can these fine minds have been wrong? Is it possible that they and countless other men and women have been deluded? Can the lofty intuitions of these sensitive spirits be false? Like Job, who among us has not cried, "If a man die, shall he live again?"

NORMAN VINCENT PEALE

We have considered the arguments for and against, have weighed the evidence and scanned the horizon of the years, and have been unsatisfied. Then at last in the regions of faith, ringing clearly like the notes of a silver bell, we have heard a voice vibrant with authority, the voice of Jesus, "If it were *not* so, I would have told you." Thus we may believe that the deepest intuitions and profoundest faith of the human soul in its moments of luminous insight shall not betray us.

BEAUTY AS EVIDENCE

Intimations of immortality find definite basis in two great facts: what God is and what man is. It finds its validity in the worth of man and the character of God. What values are there in human life which give it, at least, the hint of eternity?

There is, first, the thrill of men to beauty, which stirs and woos him with an irresistible lure. It makes him conscious finally of a beauty within. He looks, for example, upon Mount Shasta on a clear morning, when the great cone of the mountain towers above the wooded hillsides of California, its ermine mantle of snow gleaming like myriads of diamonds in the sunlight, its waterfalls spurting like scintillating jewels into great dizzy valleys, its murmuring rivers wending their way to the sea. He sees and hears and is conscious of the vastness and cleanness of the world. It calls to a greatness and cleanness in his own heart. He stands by the brink of the Grand Canyon in the crisp air of the Arizona uplands and watches the brilliant colors of gold and red and scarlet merging into the eerie shadows until purple twilight softly covers the towers, domes and minarets of the vast abyss. Standing in the midst of that mighty silence, where nature before his very eyes is carving her story upon the rocks, he feels so deeply that it awes him with an affinity between the age-old world and his own soul. He wanders through a woodland, listening to the myriad sounds of life, conscious of the healing touch of nature. He sits beneath a tree and watches the sunlight as it splashes down between the branches onto the dark earth beneath and, like Wordsworth at Tintern Abbey, feels not only a "Presence" that disturbs him "with the joy of elevated thought" but also a "something far more deeply interfused, which rolls through all things" and comes to rest finally in his own soul.

INSTINCT AND INTUITION

Another value in man suggesting immortality is his response to the ideal—to goodness. Phillips Brooks said a great thing: "We are haunted by the ideal life; it is in our blood and will never be still. Man may fail to follow the ideal life and may not yield to its impulses but he cannot escape from its constant resurgence in his soul. It will forever haunt him." Whence come these mystic impulses toward goodness? Surely from divinity deep within the breast, straining ever toward the pure heights of life. Because it is there and ever persists, may we not conclude that it is ultimate in any characterization we may make of human life?

Man's capacity for insight and intuition, also, bears witness to his immortality. Intuition may be defined as that knowledge which is above reason. It is man's highest faculty and goes where reason cannot go. It is a faculty earlier than the intellectual process and therefore more peremptory and decisive. The validity of the intuitions was recognized by the great thinker, Henri Bergson. "Some other faculty," he said, "than the intellect is necessary for the apprehension of reality." Emerson likewise supports the right of intuitions to our respect by saying, "When God wants to carry a point with his children, he plants his argument in the instincts."

An ultimate argument, then, for the immortality of life is the instinctive and native intuition of the human soul. There was, therefore, a profound truth in the mind of Browning when he built for Abt Vogler a Temple of Melody up which the organist made his way to a height whence he could look out on life from above and see it as the angels see it. There he observed that the broken arcs ultimately become round; that the broken aspirations of man are completed; that man's noblest dreams are realized; and then he led him back to the earth with this substantial philosophy: "God has a few of us to whom he whispers in the ear; the rest

may reason and welcome, 'tis we musicians who know." There is genuine insight.

Once, twice, perhaps three times in a life under some stress or sorrow, straining our ears we hear a reassuring voice and shading our eyes we see intimations of an immortality to be. The Christian heart believes that if these intuitions and instincts were not so, Jesus would have told us. We rest our faith in immortality upon the reliability of Jesus. He knew our longings and understood our intuitions. Had there been no objective reality in the direction in which they point, he would have told us. On the contrary, while he did not explain the after life, he gave us sublime hope by assuring us that our intuitions are trustworthy—"If it were not so, I would have told you."

THE CHARACTER OF GOD

The second great intimation of immortality is found in the character of God. We believe the soul was not made to be destroyed but will live on because of what God apparently is. We believe he is intelligent, and everywhere in the universe are evidences in support of that belief. The mark of intelligence is law and order and perfect precision. Here is a great skyscraper towering fifty, sixty, seventy stories above the street. It is built to the fraction of an inch on law. Would we not be very foolish to say that this great universe, infinitely more intricate and complicated than any man-made structure, came into being without personal intelligence? Moreover, any person of intelligence will recognize an article of intrinsic worth and become a conservator of values. If a person is wasteful or destructive or even careless, his intellectual capacity is called into question. Thus we sometimes speak contemptuously of a fool and his money being soon parted.

Observe the values God has created. He has made men like Shakespeare, Milton, Aristotle, Socrates, Lincoln and a host of others less widely known but whose personalities have been radiant and whose efforts have been creative. Would it be the mark of intelligence to permit the destruction of such marvelous creation at the end of threescore years and ten? Would God do what any intelligent individual would not do? The mere thought is inconceivable. No, Emerson is right: "What is excellent, as God lives, is permanent"—in a house, in a world, or in a life.

And too, we regard God as a Father, loving and just. That is what Jesus said he is and because of Jesus, with his goodness and sacrificial spirit, his beauty of life, we believe that God is like that. Could a father thrust his children away? But one may raise the question: "Behold the pain and sorrow in the world. Would God, as a Father, permit his children to suffer in this manner?" I think of my own father. He loves me; he would give his life for me; he has sacrificed many things for me, but I remember a room where my father and I used to retire on occasion, where he practiced the laying on of hands in an unecclesiastical manner, finishing with that ancient parental excuse—that it hurt him more than it did me. I needed such parental discipline, else I would grow to manhood soft and with only a partial appreciation of life's disciplinary values. But I remember other times, many of them, when my father in love and tenderness put his hand upon my head or his arms of protection about me.

Thus, when one becomes a man, he is but a child grown larger and when the Great Father of the universe disciplines him, is he to conclude that love does not exist? The total treatment of a man by God over the course of a lifetime on sober reflection will indicate that, with Whittier, one may say:

> I know not where His islands lift
> Their fronded palms in air;
> I only know I cannot drift
> Beyond His love and care.

The incontestable love of God leads us back finally to that great text with which we may reassure ourselves regarding personal immortality on this Easter day—"If it were not so, I would have told you."

Communing With the Dawn

By M. H. Lichliter

THE most stubborn fact which all men and women have to face is the fact of death. It is not an attractive theme for meditation. It is not something which we like to talk about. But no man is quite honest who does not come to terms with the fact of death. The wise man never broods about death, never worries about it, never thinks of it as in any way isolated from life. That is to say, he does not detach the idea of death from what one might call the run-of-mine in human experience. He sees it in relation to the whole of life.

But the fact is there just the same, a grim fact, sometimes a tragic fact, and everyone who is wise must make up his mind about it. One cannot pick up a daily paper without being forced to reckon with this common human experience. It may be a tragedy at an unguarded railroad crossing which sends a bus load of laughing children to their death. It may be the sudden passing of someone we know very well. We met him on the street and chatted with him one day—and on the next day he was gone. There were men who walked with you last Easter who are here this morning only in spirit. They have gone to join that encompassing cloud of witnesses who from the shining battlements of heaven watch the race which we are running here.

That candid, honest, straightforward recognition of the fact of death is not morbid. It is just the acceptance of life as it is, with no pages turned down, with no secrets hidden away, with no pleasant lies told about human experience.

THE CHALLENGE OF EASTER

Only the romantic find refuge in high-sounding words. It was a distinguished English preacher who reminded us that the greatest musical composition from the pen of Strauss, "Tod und Verklärung," "builds up and up a stupendous structure of sound to utter the tremendous word of dissolution. But this tremendous

word nature utters every hour without even raising her breath." And he went on to ask searchingly, What does it avail what eloquent persons say *about* death? Has anyone anything to say *to* it?

That, as I understand it, is the challenge of Easter. No matter what else may be in our minds, this question stands out in the observance of this day. What have I to say to death? What is my honest attitude toward this stubborn fact which no man can evade, and which no man dare ignore?

If it were just *my* death, it would not matter so much to me. But that's the least part of the Easter problem. It is the passing of someone we love that matters. Dr. John Baillie drives this Easter dilemma home to every

M. H. Lichliter

one of us when he says in plain, almost brutal words: "No man who was not a cad could stand by his beloved's deathbed and say, or even think, 'For all I know, or care, this is the last of you, my dear.' " What is it that I dare to say to death?

The poet helps us where the philosopher fails. That is why we carry on the program this morning a sonnet by Thomas Curtis Clark which he calls "The Journey." It expresses the attitude which Easter teaches us to take toward the fact of death:

> When Death, the angel of our higher dreams,
> Shall come far-ranging from the hills of light
> He will not catch me unaware; for I
> Shall be as now communing with the dawn.
> For I shall make all haste to follow him
> Along the valley, up the misty slope,
> Where life lets go and Life at last is born.
> There I shall find the dreams that I have lost
> On toilsome earth, and they will guide me on
> Beyond the mists unto the farthest height.
> I shall not grieve except to pity those
> Who cannot hear the songs that I shall hear.

Communing with the dawn—that phrase gripped me. For, after all, the story of the first Easter is really the gospel of the dawn. Do you recall how the record begins as Luke tells the story? "But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came unto the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. And they entered in and found not the body of the Lord Jesus." The stories differ, I know. The scholars tell us that one can disentangle at least three major strands in the Resurrection story, perhaps four. Not one of us is competent to report accurately upon what happened on that first Easter morning. As Dr. Bowie says, "The stories of the different gospels melt into one another like changing figures seen against the sunrise and through the morning mists."

But one thing was very clear to them, that Jesus Christ was alive, that all he stood for was to live on in them as an indwelling presence. The fear of death fell from their hearts like a cast-off garment—and they knew that there in the dawn immortal hope was born.

Does that mean anything to you and to me? Fill in the background of the Easter picture—with all that life brings to us in its sterner moods, "the inhospitable and unfruitful hours, the gray monotonies, the manifold ministries of disappointment and loneliness and sorrow." Then flood all the foreground with the sunrise, the tremulous light of dawn, and see how quickly the darkness disappears. That's why we crowd the churches on Easter Sunday. That is why these great triumphant hymns and anthems stir us to the depths of our hearts. It is because down deep in our hearts we believe that Jesus Christ conquered death, and that he brought life and immortality to light.

Communing with the dawn! No matter how one's heart may be broken by a deep personal sorrow; no matter how many doubts of a future life may rise like spectres in our souls, Easter stands out as the symbol of an open tomb.

THE PERSISTENCE OF THE PERSONAL

Let us go deeper into this matter. The poet tells us that if we keep our faces toward the sunrise, we shall come to a point where life lets go and Life at last is born. He spells the first with a small "l" and the second he puts in capitals. He seems to be saying that no matter how much joy we get out of life as it is lived here the larger and finer and more glorious life is on the other side of death. Let me put that idea into a phrase which you will not easily forget—Easter stands for *the persistence of the personal.* All that is distinctive and worth while in you and in me will survive the death of the body. The house falls—the tenant lives on. As an old ritual phrases it—our bodies fall like autumn leaves to enrich our mother earth. But our souls return unto God who gave them. What we are lives on forever. The personal in us is permanent.

I am fully aware that this idea is being challenged by the skepticism of our times. We are told that it is an ignoble and egotistic thing to indulge the hope that these lives of ours are worthy of being lived forever.

We are admonished that the nobler dream is to merge our lives with the life of the race—and live on in memory. That sort of thing, you will remember, was very popular during the war. "Who dies if England lives?" That is what Reichsführer Hitler is trying to preach to the people of Germany. It is the Nazi theory of the immortal life. Who dies if Germany lives? Of what significance is your poor, puny, isolated, individual life? The State claims you. The State will make cannon fodder of you. Your death does not matter—if only the State lives.

Perhaps, in the hysteria of war, that might influence us. It certainly means nothing to us today. We would ask—just *what* England is to live on? What *kind* of a Germany is to be built upon our prostrate bodies? Is the undying race, even here in America, the sort of thing our fathers dreamed about? Is it a land of freedom or of regimentation? Is it a nation free—or a nation in chains? Now that we see civilizations changing and national cultures crumbling into ruin, we are not greatly thrilled about the prospect of merging these lives of ours with the life of the race. That sort of immortality leaves us cold.

But it does not leave us cold—when we catch the deeper meaning of the Easter dawn, the revelation that one's personal life lives on, that we are worth something to God, and that when life with the little "l" drops out of the picture, Life with the big "L" begins in glorious promise. Jesus said very little about the sort of life that is lived on the farther side of death. Once, however, the curtain was raised just far enough to give us a hint. It was in the parable of the talents, when he said: "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

THE INCIDENT OF DEATH

Obviously that is not a promise for the life that now is. Uncounted multitudes of men and women have been loyal and faithful to a few things entrusted to them, and have died with these few things clinging to their hands. Obviously Jesus was speaking of the richer fulfilments and the more equitable adjustments which we are to receive hereafter. He is not, in any sense, offering heaven as a bribe, or as a reward for fidelity. He is trying to say that personal values are enduring values, that what is excellent is permanent, and that the ultimate goal of personality is perfect justice and complete realization of the self.

Here, then, are the two great major lessons of Easter, two compelling truths that stand out in the gospel of the dawn. The first is the brevity of death and the second is the persistence of the personal. If these two things are true, as we believe them to be true, what changes should we make in our lives? You will agree with me that it is sheer hypocrisy to sing the Easter hymns with our lips if we do not feel the Easter truth in our hearts. It is nothing but affectation if we are thrilled by the drama of the Easter observance and do not live each day as though we were always communing with the dawn.

I thought of that a year ago when someone in Miami told me a story of an ancient Seminole custom. Tigertail, the Seminole chief, had recently died. Tribal custom demanded that his widow take down her hair, and hide herself in the fastnesses of the Everglades for three years of mourning. Unfortunately there are Christian men and women who act that way in spite of all the blazing light of the Easter hope. They offer a crushed life as the tribute of love. They shut themselves off in their own selfish grief as though death had not brought release and victory and eternal progress to one they loved. Some of our mourning customs are openly pagan. And the way we allow ourselves to be crushed by a great sorrow is a poor commentary upon the faith which we profess.

"WHEN LIFE TUMBLES IN"

Of course there is grief. We would be less than human if hearts did not seem to break when life tumbles in. Let us accept the darkness, for the moment, and keep our eyes keen to catch the first signs of dawn. We have a heartening example in a man who is perhaps the world's greatest preacher to preachers—Dr. Arthur Gossip of Aberdeen, Scotland. His wife, who had shared the responsibilities of a great city parish with him, died suddenly. There was no warning, no time to prepare for the change, no time to think through all the readjustments which would have to be made. Suddenly she slipped away, leaving behind her an almost intolerable loneliness. That was Tuesday. On Sunday, Dr. Gossip did not seek to be excused from his pulpit. He did not go away, he was communing with the dawn. He entered his pulpit and preached one of the most searching and most helpful sermons his people had ever heard. He took for his subject "When Life Tumbles In, What Then?" Hundreds of men and women have been given new courage by what he did that day.

A crushed life is a poor tribute to love. Easter says to us: There is a new day ahead. There is twilight to be sure, but it is the twilight of the dawn. Courage! Take up the duty that lies nearest you! Believe that death is just an incident in the onward march of life!

I tell you they have not died,
They live and breathe with you.
They walk now—here at your side,
They tell you things are true.
Why dream of poppied sod
When you can feel their breath,
When flower and soul and God
Know, There is no death?

I tell you they have not died.
Their hands clasp yours and mine.
They are now but glorified,
They have become divine;
They live, they know, they see,
They shout with every breath—
All is Eternal Life,
There is no death.

I AM CONFIDENT that we are passing through a great moral and spiritual crisis, which is inevitable, but out of which will come religious ideas which will give to our spiritual life a new reality and significance.

ALBERT SCHWEITZER.

Dawn

By Bruce S. Wright

It began to dawn. Matthew 28:1.

THE most impressive inscription I have ever seen upon a monument is this one word—Dawn. The monument is just above Trafalgar Square, in Charing Cross Road, London. There, right in the center of the busy street, stands the nation's grateful tribute to Nurse Edith Cavell. One sees a life-size figure of the nurse against a background of granite. Underneath the figure of the nurse one reads these words cut in the stone:

EDITH CAVELL
Brussells
DAWN
October 12th
1915

Name, place, date, and one word—Dawn. What more need be said? All faith and hope and love are contained in the one word. Today we are grateful to Matthew for his discriminating use of words, for this is what he said: "It began to dawn."

One of the most thrilling experiences I ever had was a particular greeting of the dawn. I greet the dawn nearly every morning, but this time it was from a mountain top—Mount St. Thomas in the Philippine Islands. We started, a little party of us, early one morning to climb the mountain. All that day we climbed the winding mountain top—pausing now and then, from sheer exhaustion, to rest. Up, ever up, until at sunset, with one final scramble, we reached the top. That night, wrapped in heavy blankets, we slept in a little bunkhouse on the top of the mountain. We were up early the next morning, while it was still dark, to see the sun rise. I remember standing on a height that dropped precipitously—the tops of tall pine trees at our very feet. We looked to the east, over the vast Pacific. We caught the first glimmerings of the day. Then dawn, dawn: "Out of darkness the world rolled into light, daybreak, daybreak everywhere!"

Easter brings us to the mountain top. We are on a privileged height, waiting for the sun to rise upon an expectant world. How better can we say what is in our hearts than by the use of Matthew's morning word—Dawn!

A NEW DAY

Easter is the dawn of a new day. There is a vast difference between another day and a new day. Another day is a repetition, a mechanical affair. To count time by saying, "Well, here is another day," is exactly like turning a crank and out come the days—one day, another day, another and another, and on through threescore years and ten. Something happened on Easter morn that changed humanity's attitude toward time. Henceforward everyone who believes in Christ approaches time with an entirely new attitude. To him every day becomes a new day. We all agree that one of the chief problems of time is its monotony. Life is a humdrum affair to the average person. The same old round over and over; the same tasks, meeting the same people, the common round of common things. It was the idea of conquering the humdrum of the days that inspired Robert Louis Stevenson to write that matchless morning prayer:

> Lord, the day returns and brings its petty round of irritating concerns and duties. Help us to play the man. Help us to perform them with laughter and kind faces. Let cheerfulness with industry abound. Give us to go blithely on our business all this day and bring us to our resting beds weary and undishonored, and grant us in the end the gift of peace.

Easter dawn is Stevenson's prayer magnified a million fold, it puts the dawn into every day. Note the effect of that first Easter morning upon those who stood in the immediate presence of the tomb. Where were the two Marys? They saw the stone rolled away. They heard God's messenger say, "Jesus, whom ye seek, is not here, he is risen." With that they turned and ran toward the disciples with a new and great joy. Life was changed for them. They were changed from faltering followers to flaming evangels. Robert W. Dale of Carr's Lane, Birmingham, England, had a similar experience. One year, while preparing his Easter sermon, suddenly, with all the vividness of insistent reality, he became conscious of the living Christ. He rose from his chair, walked up and down in his study, saying over and over, "Jesus is living, Jesus is living." Thereafter every Sunday in Carr's Lane was Easter, and every day a new day for Robert Dale. The experience of the dawn is waiting for all, young or old, who will claim it.

A NEW CHANCE

Easter also betokens the dawn of a new chance. This is central in Christian thought. Assuredly Easter sets its seal upon the Christian doctrine that there is such a thing as forgiveness, that "all who have sinned and come short of the glory of God" are given a new chance. We talk about the missing note in preaching. I wonder if this is it! A leading layman said in a letter to the editor of his church weekly: "Countless sermons are being preached dealing with interesting ethical and intellectual matters, which omit reference to the need of man to be born again. Such preaching is impotent," he charged, "because it lacks the passionate conviction of the power of Christ to save from sin," and give men a new chance. I would suggest to this Christian layman that what we need is not less ethical or intellectual preaching, but more of such preaching, and all preaching permeated with the passionate conviction that God does not desert men in their extremity—he is the God of another chance.

There is a vital connection between the returning prodigal and Easter morn, between the awakened woman at the well and Easter morn, between repentant Zacchaeus and Easter morn, between Mary the Magdalene and Easter morn, between the patient man waiting long at the pool of Siloam and Easter morn—for them and for all others Easter morn spells the dawn of another chance. How simply and beautifully Robert Freeman illustrates this in these lines:

> I played with my blocks—I was but a child.
> What towers did I raise, what castles I piled!

But they tottered and fell, all my building was vain;
Yet my father said kindly, "We'll try it again!"

I played with my days—what's time to a lad?
Why pore over books? Play, play and be glad!
Till my youth was all passed, like a sweet summer rain;
Yet my father said kindly, "We'll try it again!"

I played with my chance; such gifts as were mine
To win with, to help with, to serve the divine,
I spent on myself, till but fragments remain;
Yet my Father says kindly, "We'll try it again!"

I played with my soul, the soul that is I,
The best that is in me—I stifled its cry;
I lulled it, I dulled it, and now, O the pain!
Yet my Father says kindly, "We'll try it again!"

A NEW IDEA

Easter brings also the dawn of a new idea. The gospel is crammed full of new ideas which the world never heard before. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," was a new idea. It is still new, but we are beginning to see its truth. Certainly the blusterers and the braggarts do not inherit the earth; they may seem to, but it is all in the seeming. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God," was a new idea. Assyria, Babylon, Rome never taught that. Their doctrine was, Blessed are the warmakers, for they shall be called the children of God. They have their followers today—those deceived, misguided or deliberately evasive people who seek peace through war, rather than peace through peace. "It is more blessed to give than to receive," was a new idea. It is still new to multitudes. But it is growing, that powerful idea that progress is made through sharing. Sharing ideas, visions, experiences as well as money.

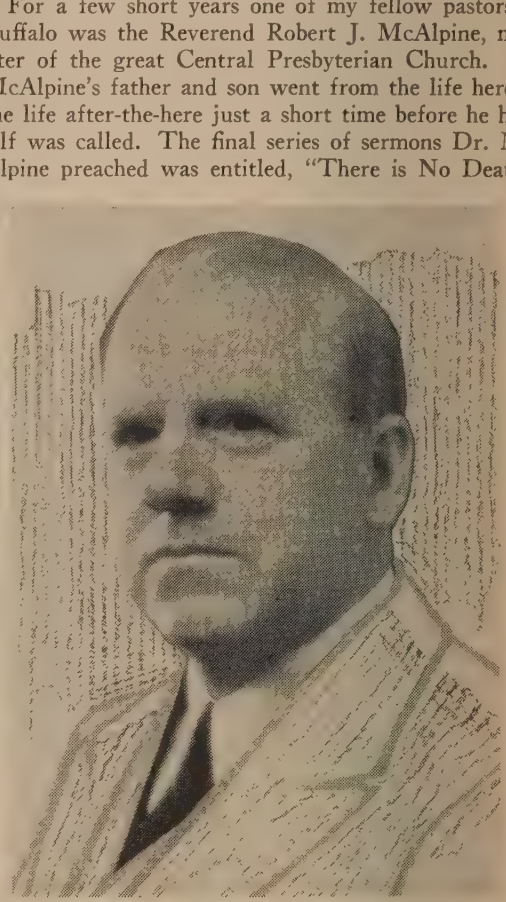
"Life is more than meat and the body than raiment," was a new idea. That was not the teaching of Christ's day. He brought something new for men to think about when he put the emphasis upon the inner life. Our external life of material things is but the scaffolding to assist us in the erection of the real structure, which is the inner spiritual life of mankind.

Easter faces toward the sunrise; over the eastern horizon we see the dawn of many a new idea, shedding its light upon a shadowed world.

A NEW LIFE

Easter proclaims another dawn—the dawn of a new life; a new life here and now. In one of his books Ernest Dowsett tells the story of a minister who went to call on an aged couple in the Scottish Highlands. Everything about the house looked neat and comfortable, but the minister wondered if the home might be lacking one thing. So he knocked on the door, and to the woman who answered the summons he inquired, "Does Jesus live here?" She stared at him. "Does Jesus live here?" She closed the door and went to the shed where her husband was working and told him about the strange question. The husband said, "Didn't you tell him that we go to church, and that we put something in the collection every Sunday?" "No, I didn't tell him that, for that was not what he asked; he asked if Jesus lived here, and that is different." Yes, it is different. In the new experience of Easter dawn life is different, forever different, in country and city, at work and play, in home or church—a new life here and now. But Easter does not stop with the dawn of a new life here, it marches straight ahead to the dawn of a new life hereafter—that is, after-the-here.

For a few short years one of my fellow pastors in Buffalo was the Reverend Robert J. McAlpine, minister of the great Central Presbyterian Church. Dr. McAlpine's father and son went from the life here to the life after-the-here just a short time before he himself was called. The final series of sermons Dr. McAlpine preached was entitled, "There is No Death."



BRUCE S. WRIGHT

The sermons appeared in print just before his passing and bore this dedication:

To the Memory
of my good father
and my dear son
Robert Knox
who now know that there is no death

One does not ordinarily turn to the movies for illustrations of immortality, but I remember a film called "The Iron Mask" that had a great moment in it. D'Artagan, having carried his arduous task to a triumphant conclusion only to be dealt a foul and fatal blow, staggers out to die alone. Then the clouds part and one sees his three dauntless comrades smiling down at him, and reaching down to welcome him to the new life. Then there flashes on the screen, not the conventional word "End," but the startling word "Beginning." Call it cheap and sentimental if you will, but there is something to it. That is the word of Easter dawn—Beginning. Phillips Brooks used to say that death is like turn-

ing over a page in a book by an author we have learned to love and trust. It began to dawn—we turn the page. For Christ is an author we have learned to love and trust. "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's House are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. . . ." Where is that place? I do not know. "Where is Kandersteg?" a traveler in Switzerland asked a lad along the road. "I do not know," replied the lad, "but there's the road that leads to it." I do not know where the life after-the-here is, but I do know its direction. It is toward the Easter dawn.

ETERNAL SUNRISE

Dawn—a new day, a new chance, a new idea, a new life. All this Christ brings us by way of the Easter dawn. There is a story about a man who was talking with Thomas Carlyle, telling him that he proposed to start a new religion which would entirely supplant the religion of Christ. There would be no mysteries about it, it would all be as plain as the multiplication table. He would call the new religion "Positivism." Carlyle is said to have replied, "Good. All you will need to do will be to speak as never man spake, live as he lived, die as he died, be crucified, rise again the third day and get the world to believe that you are still alive; then your new religion will have a chance." In other words, all he needed to do was to put Dawn into his religion. But man cannot do that, only God can do that. It began to dawn. There are many things we do not know, "we see through a glass darkly." But of one thing we are certain—for this we are thankful today—that ours is a morning faith, that those who with faith face the tomb see an eternal sunrise.

Morning of the Soul

By Robert Merrill Bartlett

DURING a recent expedition two explorers were imprisoned in the Carlsbad Caves in New Mexico. These two men had entered a small opening that appeared to lead into an unexplored chamber. On their pushing through the hole a stone was dislodged and a rock crashed down, shut off the opening and imprisoned them. The other members of their party were far back in the caverns and no shout could penetrate the wall of stone. The frightened men tried to push through the barrier, but they seemed hopelessly entombed. They grew panic-stricken. At length in their desperate effort they crawled on their hands and knees to find some outlet. They soon came to a huge crystal room of bewildering beauty. Every square inch of the walls and ceiling was of crystal; the place sparkled like a fairy palace. They rested here for a time. The beauty brought calmness to their minds, saved them from panic, and helped them to plan their escape. They crawled back over the jagged path, lay down in the cramped opening and dug their way through the rock wall to the light.

Our lives and our world are imprisoned today in the darkness of struggle. Easter comes again with its vision of the larger room where we can plan life's expedition with new strategy. Upon our darkness dawns morning of the soul! Our long waiting and anxiety are answered by the dawn summons: Behold, beyond the cross, the open tomb; the sky aglow with light, the air full of song, and the universe alive with spring! Arise from groveling fear and subjection to care! Arise to the life victorious!

This day has become the universal morning of the soul because it sheds light upon the mystery of the future. Since the beginning men have longed to penetrate beyond our little life. I have stood beside a sarcophagus, made from the cedars of Lebanon, in which the mummified body of an Egyptian nobleman has lain for four thousand years. Beside him were the tiny gods of pottery which had been buried with him. Each of these little figures carried a pickax. His ancient people believed that in the period after death all human souls must dig their way out to freedom. The little gods would help the nobleman to dig beyond the dark wall of death to the dawn. At all times everywhere men have believed in something beyond death!

THE POTENTIALITIES OF MAN

That conviction is strengthened by the discoveries of our new age. We stand beside "General Sherman," the largest and oldest of the Sequoia trees in California. We know that this scarred, but unconquered, giant is at least six thousand years old. A tree may live for sixty centuries. What about man with his threescore and ten years, with potentialities and powers that dwarf the majesties of nature? When we peer out into an atmosphere alive with sound waves laden with a billion voices, we behold our sun and its mighty planets, and go on into a universe that contains three thousand million stars, identified up to this date by the searching eye of man, with exploration just begun—we are forced to answer "Why not? We will go on and on in a universe where millions of light years express the pulse and purpose of enduring life!"

To this evidence we would add the Easter testimony of a human soul. Jesus, the hero of Easter morning, went beyond these suppositions and demonstrated the endless life. We do not have to struggle through a black wall of suffering into nothingness. God bears us through the evening hours into the morning light. The cross did not defeat our comrade. Why should it conquer us if we have with us the intelligence of the universe and a career of infinite sweep?

In our confusion we mourn:

> It is finished! It is finished! as the sun sinks down to rest,
> And the sky burns blood and amber in the wonder-weaving west,
> For the day is nearly done.

But only half of life's adventure is told if we remain in darkness of suffering—

> For another day is dawning as the winged darkness flies,
> And the silver stars keep sentry till another sun shall rise,
> For the daylight is eternal, and the sunshine never dies,
> It is always marching on. . . .

For an empty tomb is waiting, and the east is silver grey,
As the angels of the morning trumpet in another day!

This Easter assurance changes faith. It takes the panic from our hearts and sets us in harmony with a mighty plan that leads on to a noble destiny. More than this, it revolutionizes daily conduct. To grasp the meaning of life that lies beyond our earthly passions and squabbles, gives dignity to life's task and to the soul of every comrade on the earth. Cynicism, superficial pursuits, lawlessness, graft and war go, when we grasp the moral dignity of human existence which is lived under the infinite purposes of an Eternal Reality.

HOW SHALL WE LIVE NOW?

Easter is the morning of the soul because it sheds light upon the mystery of tomorrow, and also, because it sheds light upon the mystery of today. Our sole concern is not, Where shall I go when this life ends? but, How shall I live, what shall I do here? We must live fully now in the turbulent present hour. We like to luxuriate in Easter sentiments. We rehearse its fair story, feast on its flowers and anthems, and breathe air from a new realm. But what does this beautiful promise of advancing life mean unless we join our efforts day by day in the upward climb to eternity? What is immortality—a sudden transplanting, or an achievement? Ah, it must be an achievement! To share in Jesus' victory we must do our developing in this life!

Easter is the happy day of the year because it summons us to this adventure of living the full and vigorous life. Our dark crucifixion evenings can be changed to Easter mornings if we believe and toil. Like sufferers who pray in the darkness for the coming of the morning, we can see the silver streaks of dawn across the sky and hear the chorus of men and nature sing—"Joy, for life in its majesty is ours!"

Let us this day lift up our united song of faith in God and in the powers that are given us to achieve peace and prosperity. Our baffling problems can be conquered if we will keep the Easter spirit in the daily round. We are now enslaved by the barbarian ways of ruthless commercial warfare among nations, an archaic patriotism, diplomatic trickery and intrigue, and toleration of the war system, which have kept us in the jungle long enough. The people of the earth must have done with these blind, brute ways! Let us lift up our united voices and demand the new habits of peace and enlightenment! Let us cease to exist like cowering slaves and begin to live like sons of God!

FAITH FOR TODAY'S TASKS

Romain Rolland, the heroic French reformer, who spent years of hunger in a Paris attic striving to give his message of internationalism to the world, and who has been exiled from his country since 1914 because of his opposition to war, has written a novel called "The Death of a World." He speaks as a prophet who has suffered; his body is breaking as he lies on an invalid's bed; but his brave spirit still believes. His story deals with the dark years between the Versailles Treaty and 1933—a time in which we seem to have suffered "The Death of a World." Rolland portrays the strange madness of this era, and then demands the dawn of a new day:

Sick humanity needs to rejuvenate its impoverished blood. The cowards whimper: "All is lost!" All is saved, or will be. But nothing for nothing! We must pay the price.

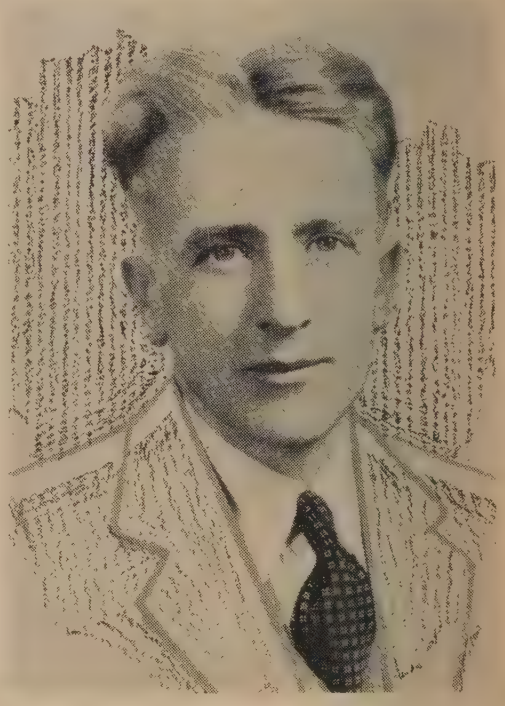
So long as a man remains free and true in the depths of his spirit—all is not yet lost.

Never grow weary. Help those who are sinking in the marshes of despair to get out!

A world of pain! At one and the same hour, nations are dying of oppression and misery. Darkness seems to be closing in on Europe.

In it a world is weeping. A world is dying.

But in it, likewise, I hear already the crying of the child.



Robert Merrill Bartlett

We are now witnessing the birth of a new world! The resurrection works not only in the realm of the inner life, but also in the affairs of human society. One epoch ends in chaos, and a new day begins in splendor. If every person who prays an Easter prayer today will go home and get busy at his job of living the Christian adventure, we will witness in a short time the birth of a new era that will surpass in knowledge, achievement and human comradeship the glories of the past.

Oliver Cromwell on his deathbed, hearing the weeping of his friends, roused himself and cried, "Is there no one here who will praise God?" Confusion and difficulty surge about us, is there no one who will praise God and stir the soul of humanity with hope? "Only the day dawns to which we awake. There is more day to dawn. The sun is but a morning star."

This morning of the soul offers to us its victorious truth about the unknown tomorrow and about the per-

plexing today. Casting off anxiety and weariness, let us be lifted up by its transforming hallelujahs. Whatever our cross may be, we can be caught up to new levels, like the bell ringer in Korolenko's Russian story. On Easter the old man went into the steeple of the church where he had proudly rung the bells for many years. He could scarcely mount the stairs because of age and illness. He prayed that God might permit him to ring out the resurrection song over the earth once more. From the belfry he looked down upon the graveyard and the sleeping village. Murmuring "All glory be to God," he took hold of the ropes and began to ring out the song, "Christ is risen." His weariness and weakness left him and he was transported by the magic of its melody.

"His old heart forgot about life, full of cares and wrongs. The bell ringer forgot that life for him had become a thing shut up in a melancholy tower; he forgot that he was alone in the world—like an old stump, weather-beaten and broken."

The music blended into "one great chorus, and sang to him of joyousness, which he had not tasted in his life. And the old man continued to tug at the ropes, while tears ran down his face, and his heart beat tremulously with happiness." The people cried, "Never before have we heard the message of Easter played with such beauty," as the old bell ringer took his hands from the ropes, and fell exhausted on the bench, while his last tears trickled silently down his pale face.

Caught up today by the Easter hallelujah we see a new morning dawn. Tomorrow is secure, and today can be filled with the adventure of Christian living. The Eternal Christ stands before us, within the halo of adoring centuries, and salutes us with the joy-word of the ages, "Hail." "Be of good cheer! I have overcome the world!"

An Easter Visit to the Tomb of Jesus

By Herbert Booth Smith

Come, see the place where the Lord lay. Matthew 28:6.

A TINY opening sometimes lets in a good deal of light. It does so in this text. There is a little crevice in the tense of the verb of the angel's message to the women. There are three verbs in this sentence. Two of them refer to the women and have no skylight in them. But the third one, which relates to Jesus, lets in the morning: "Come, see the place where the Lord *lies"?* Ah no—that's the point. His habitation of the grave is now over. It is the past tense. All that the pilgrims to Calvary can see is where Jesus *was*—not where he *is*.

It is not that way in the cemeteries. Again and again we read the inscription "Hic Jacet" which is the Latin for "Here lies." It is always in the present tense. Why, the only reason for having cemeteries is to take care of bodies that are there. Jesus would break up the graveyard business for good and all, if everybody followed his example. All one would need would be a few graves that could be rented for two or three days at a time, after which the tenant would move out and a new occupant would come. But all the stonecutters use the present tense—it is the only one they know: "Here lies John Jones"—not "Here lay." What is the use of telling the world where a person was? What concerns us is where he is.

And this change of tense has made Easter. If Christ had taken up his residence in the present tense and stayed there, we would not be here today. It is the fact that he moved out of his borrowed domicile that has made all the trouble. Those people who won't stay put certainly stir things up. That unceremonious leave-taking has not only made Easter; it has made the Christian Sunday and the Christian church. Someone has said that there is a hidden glory in the grammar of Easter—and there is. This little verb lets out the imprisoned sunlight and illumines for the Christian the whole dark field of death.

In what spirit, then, shall we make our Easter visit to the sepulcher of Jesus? Much depends on the attitude of mind in which one sets out on this tour of discovery. Shall we go in a spirit of skepticism, convinced beforehand that some fraud was committed in the case of Jesus' burial? Or shall we go in a mood of black despair, committed to the proposition that death ends all? Or shall we repair to the tryst with an open mind, in the spirit of honest investigation, determined to see clearly what is to be found there? Let us go in this latter mood. There is no use to close the case of the resurrection before it is opened. Let us, like Henry Ward Beecher's father, put ourselves to school and study the facts of that Easter transaction with an honest mind. Beecher said once to his daughter Harriet, "I have been reviewing my evidences and have come to the conclusion that I have a right to hope." Let us do the same thing—and God grant we have the same result.

I. THE TOMB OF JESUS WAS A NEW TOMB

It is too bad that it is such an expensive thing to die. Often part of the grief of the departure of a loved one is caused by the fact that in our poverty we are not able to procure and provide the kind of sepucher to which love feels its beloved is justly entitled. Well, how is it for one with the poverty of Jesus? Surely his sepulcher will be a very modest one. Surely none of his fishermen disciples are able to afford any grand place of interment. No, probably not, but through the kindness of a friend a new tomb is placed at his disposal. I am so glad that this was so, because it means several things.

One thing it means is that Jesus is worthy of our best. Second-hand things may be given to the Salvation Army and the Goodwill Industries and may do a great deal of good. But shall we give cast-off, second-best things to our Heavenly Father? Shall God be a preferred creditor or a deferred one? Shall we offer the world the first choice and let God be satisfied with the fragments that remain?

Then again this new tomb means the uniqueness of Christ. We like to feel that the tomb which gave sanctuary to our Christ had never served anyone before. I've sometimes wondered whether Joseph of Arimathea ever

used it again. One somehow likes to feel that he walled it up after the resurrection and put up a tablet reading like this: "Sacred to the memory of Jesus Christ who rested his weary body here between Good Friday and Easter."

II. THE EASTER TOMB WAS A BORROWED ONE

Jesus Christ was the great borrower of history. He had to borrow a cattle barn in which to be born. He had to borrow five loaves and two fishes from a little boy in order to feed the five thousand. He had to borrow a fisherman's boat in which to preach. He had to borrow another man's donkey on which to ride on Palm Sunday. And, last of all, he had to borrow another man's grave in which to lie down to sleep when his thirty-three years were done.

There is a bright spot in this story and that is this: Christianity from the first makes it appeal to a few people of prominence, as well as to the poor and needy. Not all Jesus' friends were tramps or fishers or tax collectors. A professional man like Dr. Luke, and a brilliantly educated man like St. Paul, and a philanthropist like Joseph of Arimathea, were among the followers of Jesus. "Not many rich, not many mighty are called," but at least some are. Zebedee had a large fishing business and several hired servants and yet from his family came two of Christ's disciples. "The rich and the poor meet together—the Lord is the maker of them all."

But wait a moment—we are not ready to pass on yet. It seems to me as I stand by that beautiful tomb that I hear a voice sounding from somewhere in the distance—far away down the years. Ah yes—now we get it. It is the voice of Isaiah. What is he saying? It is this: "He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death." About whom is he talking? It is the coming Messiah. What would seem more unlikely than that this coming one who was to be God's Messiah should make his grave with the wicked? And yet it so turned out that he was crucified between two thieves—and Isaiah, though so far away, spoke the truth. And he made his grave also with the rich. Some say this refers to the robbers on the other two crosses, since it means the wrongfully rich. Grammatically they are probably correct, but there is something more than grammar here. Poetically, I like to think, it takes Joseph in. Yes, this poor Jew, who had not where to lay his head, had a rich friend, who stayed away from the session of the Sanhedrin which condemned him, but who boldly stood up as his friend at the end. Don't forget the Arimathean! Write him at the head of the list of great givers and philanthropists of the Christian cause for the last 1900 years, for he was willing to subscribe a gift to Jesus when Jesus was down and out.

III. A GARDEN-SURROUNDED TOMB

"We are so stupid about death," says a great theologian, and I suppose we are. Why should we make everything connected with it just as bleak and black and forbidding as possible? One small boy will not forget, though he is now a man, the awfulness of death as it was presented to his eyes. A great black crepe was hung upon the door of the house where death had occurred; the hearse and casket were black. Great black plumes were put on the harness of the horses, and not a ray of Christian sunlight was allowed to pierce the dark veils worn by the bereaved ones.

It seems strange that this should be true of Christian America, whereas in some so-called heathen lands the mourning colors are blue, yellow or white. Surely if we can't wear white for death, we might at least wear gray, because it is the combination of white and black, and it speaks of sunlight and morning and joy. I agree with those who wear black if there be no Easter. If Calvary has the last word, then despair is the order of the day. But if the cross has to give way to the crown, then crepe might give way to flowers.

Now St. John says that in the place where Jesus was

HERBERT BOOTH SMITH

crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new sepulcher. Let us think then of our Lord as resting beneath flowers and green grasses, where beauty was the order of the day. God's first plan for the human race was a garden and it is sweet to think of Jesus as resting in a garden grave.

IV. THIS WAS AN OPEN TOMB

It is curious what little things make history. When you stop to think about it you realize that the history of the last 1900 years has all been molded and colored by the position of a stone in a garden cemetery. If that stone which Joseph rolled to the door of the sepulcher had stayed in its place, how different the civilization of the next centuries might have been! For if it had remained where it belonged—and Jesus had continued dead, like any other man—and the disciples had gone back to their fishing nets to take up life where they left off—and if the Christian church had never been anything but a sect of Judaism— you and I might today be

living in the midnight dream of ignorance and unbelief. But something happened to the stone—and just what did happen, nobody was there to see.

"Who Moved the Stone?" That is the title of a book by one Frank Morison. It is a searching analysis of the scriptural records of Jesus' crucifixion, death and resurrection, tending to show that the resurrection is a historical fact. The author confesses that he started out to write a very different kind of a book, but was compelled by the evidence to write as he did. He disposes, one by one, of the various theories invented to account for the removal of the body, as, for instance, that the gardener did it because he didn't want his flowers trampled, or that Joseph did it because he repented of his rash generosity, or that Jesus pushed it himself from within after he recovered from his fainting on the cross, and so forth. He says that the inner evidence of the Gospel of Mark arrests even the uncritical reader by the granite sharpness of its details.

Well, our primary concern today is not who moved the stone so much as that somebody moved it, leaving the grave open. The thing I like about the open tomb is that it lends itself to investigation. Religion has little use for the sign "No Parking Here." The soul has a divine right to inquire, to investigate, to check the evidence.

V. THIS WAS AN EMPTY TOMB

You recall the conversation between the Moslem devotee and the Christian missionary. The Mohammedan said: "Well you must admit there is one thing we Moslems have which you Christians do not possess. When you go to Jerusalem to the church of the Holy Sepulcher, there is nothing for you but an empty place. But when we Moslems go to Mecca, at least we know where the body of our Prophet is buried." You can imagine the answer of the missionary. The Moslem himself was stating the difference between the two faiths: it is the difference between a dead Pretender and a Living Lord.

We have saved the best word to the last. The biggest fact about Joseph's tomb was that it wasn't a tomb at all—it was a room for a transient. Jesus just stopped there a night or two on his way back to glory. I don't know why he stayed that long. But perhaps it was best to wait till after the Sabbath day was over before letting loose such wonderful news in the city of Jerusalem.

There are two great works of art which set forth in contrasted forms the age-long conflict of man with the alien forces of the world. One is the Laocoon, that peerless work of ancient sculpture, which depicts the deathly struggle of the priest-father as he tries to tear the coiling serpents from himself and his children. The artist has caught the struggle at its highest point. In the midst of a tempest of agony a calm overspreads the old man's face, but it is the calm not of hope but of mute despair. So do many feel about the end of this struggle with death. The Laocoon is a confession in marble of man's failure at his best to gain mastery over evil.

The other work of art is "St. George and the Dragon." The good saint enters the lists against the devouring principle of which the dragon is the emblem and returns from the conflict in triumph. Like a king returning from his wars, the conquering hero comes home.

So it was with Jesus. He went home from the contest with death, crowned with glory and honor. It is said that the tomb of Edward I was opened eight hundred years after he was buried. When they opened the casket he was still lying with the crown on his head. It is more than eighteen hundred years today since Jesus was buried. Though his body is not there, his crown is on his head. He has taken it back home with him and methinks I can hear him calling to us today and saying: "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore. I am the root and offspring of David. I am the bright and morning star."

A Pastoral Prayer

By Samuel Harkness

ETERNAL GOD! We stand today upon the shores of time looking out across wide and uncharted seas of mystery. We are met in the name of One who bade his friends good-by with tranquil and courageous words, and then sailed forth. We cannot believe that the homing winds of Thy purpose were too weak to fill his sails, or that he went down in the gale of Thy neglect. He lives with us in life's holiest challenges and gentlest attitudes. He must live also with Thee, for all Thy goodness and love come to focus in him. Thou art indeed the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is a day of tender memory to each worshiper in Thy presence. Winsome and gracious personalities, bound to us by ties of blood and spiritual kinship, have embarked upon that voyage from which no traveler returns. We miss their wise words and healing laughter along life's dusty way. The road is lonely without them. Wast Thou not disclosed and confirmed in their patience and courage? As we reflect that we found Thee resident in them during the days of their earthly pilgrimage, so we believe that Thou art now their dwelling place. Anticipation is joined to memory as we look forward to unbroken fellowship with them and with Thee.

Help us to strive for that quality of character and conduct upon which Thou canst postulate immortality. Our thoughts and labors are marred by self-seeking, and we humbly ask Thee to look for the intent. Sometimes we act as though we do not desire or deserve eternal life. Forgive us. Aid us to drive death out of the life we now live by creating an order wherein all men may live to the full. Let the truth of Easter be as April sunshine to all who are bereaved. Clothe Thy people with the shining apparel of hope.

And for each of us may resurrection flower from righteousness, and righteousness be inspired by Thy love. Amen.

The Preacher in a World of Revolt

By William F. Rothenburger

THIS is an era of multiplying revolts. There are revolts against the worst and against the best phases of modern society. To list only a few, there is a revolt against science as the only norm by which everything shall be measured; a revolt against democracy as the cure-all form of government; a revolt against the American mania for size as the decisive factor in successful enterprises and organizations; a revolt against capitalism and the related philosophy of competition which flowered during pre-war days; a revolt against the mechanization of society; a revolt against God and moral law; and finally, there is a revolt against liberal theology.

Since the church is made up of a cross-section of humanity of which the preacher is a vital part, it follows that here is at least one man who is completely surrounded by many revolutions with which he must reckon. Before he can become a leader of his people he must first adjust his own thinking to his changing and chaotic world.

● *Between Two Extremes*

The church is caught between two possible attitudes, unawareness of revolt and change on the one hand and, on the other, an overzealous desire to meet conditions by becoming "all things to all men." In the last series of Yale lectures by Walter Russell Bowie on "The Renewing Gospel," Dr. Bowie quotes a significant statement from Raymond Robbins, who in writing about the Russian revolution charges the leaders of state with living complacently behind beautifully curtained windows, perfectly oblivious of "the ominous forces moving in the dark night of the common life of Russia." This Mr. Robbins calls "indoor mindedness," and against it Dr. Bowie also warns the church in this day of change. Comes H. Richard Niebuhr in "The Church Against the World" warning it against the opposite extreme. To adapt Mr. Robbins' term, it is Dr. Niebuhr's conviction that the church is in danger of being too outdoor minded. He avers that "the church has adjusted itself too much rather than too little to the world in which it lives." To stand on a solid footing in such a time as this is one of the chief problems of religious leadership.

It would seem that the preacher's first task in this changing and revolutionary era is to discover the vital elements in Christianity and then to help his people distinguish between the kernel and the husk. In my congregation is an honored official who avers that he would as soon listen to his pastor read from the Literary Digest as from any but the King James Version of the Bible. Such an attitude reveals a greater concern for the English language of the seventeenth century than for the tremendous principles

William F. Rothenburger

conveyed thereby. This is symptomatic of a static-mindedness which is ever

● *Revolt in Evangelism*

Thus the preacher is plunged headlong into numerous problems. Some have to do with methods while others go deeper. Prominent among these is the problem of evangelism. Manifestly every discerning Christian must believe that his religion is evangelistic by nature, that the church is dead unless it recaptures the passion of Christ for men. But there has been a revolt against certain methods used in evangelism. Both within and without the church, the majority of people concerned have been keeping aloof from what is called mass evangelism, which became a lucrative profession for those who stooped to commercial and mass psychology methods, leaving in its trail some robust Christians but likewise much woe for permanent leaders and many things to be apologized for.

Some of the interesting facts revealed by the regional evangelistic seminars recently conducted by the Federated Church in Indianapolis are as follows: that there is much concern and much floundering about this changed attitude; that one denomination had 350 congregations in Indiana last year without a single confession of faith; that many preachers, evangelists and evangelistic singers are at their wits' end, some being disposed to brand our generation as utterly Godless. On the other hand, it was revealed that churches which hold to the evangelical nature of Christianity, possess the spirit of adaptation, educate the youth in things spiritual and have the courage personally to carry the claims of God into the homes where the unchurched are, are having as many additions as they can assimilate. The problem of the preacher in this field is that of preserving the passion and message of the gospel and then adapting his method to the mood of the people. The gospel is still the power of God unto salvation to all them that believe and are brought face to face with its impelling spirit.

● *Revolt Against an Overcrowded Sunday*

Again, both the churched and the unchurched have revolted against two similar services of worship on Sunday. Three decades ago in many churches the evening service was the larger of the two. Except in certain small or specially circumstanced communities, few if any churches can lay claim to this today. With urban preachers the evening service is usually a constant nightmare. Some churches, having analyzed changed conditions, have concentrated upon the morning and midweek services. It is interesting to note the growing list of prominent congregations which have thus gracefully shifted their emphasis, among which I know of none inclined to return to the double Sunday program.

Over against these are other churches which in spite of an annual decline in evening attendance have doggedly fought to preserve the system which did valiant service until society went mad over the forming of another organization for every new idea. Church people are surfeited with programs. In spite of this, one prominent pastor contends that he will have an evening service if he is compelled to chain his janitor to a pew and preach to him alone. Another, a pastor of a powerful midwestern church, is looking for a young assistant, one of whose responsibilities will be to build up the evening service. Some churches have introduced the vesper plan instead, while others are engaging in union efforts. Neither of these plans has solved the problem permanently or restored the former large support of a second service.

Still others in desperation have resorted to very questionable methods.

Not long ago I received a request from a neighboring pastor reading about as follows: "Kindly announce our Sunday evening twin service. I will preach on the theme 'The Twin Who Sold Out' and twins will participate in the program. Should you have any twins in your congregation who can sing or recite, kindly send them." However worthy this service may have proved to be, the difficulty is that the church will soon have exhausted its available twins. So with every other padding device, including the constant importation of speakers and musicians. This is like administering digitalis to a weary heart. At best the results are temporary.

Should a church be so situated as to need an evening service for considerable groups who are denied the morning hour and can succeed at it, it is certainly the part of wisdom to provide it. But merely to try to preserve an outmoded system in many communities is as illogical as the proverbial building of a roof over the hourglass to protect it from becoming weather beaten.

● *Revolt Against Overorganization*

There has been an inevitable revolt against overorganization. For a long time the church was charged with a spirit of exclusiveness toward other altruistic agencies and with an underdeveloped organization within. No doubt this was a just criticism. But the last two and a half decades have shunted an army of strong churchmen into many worthy community enterprises and at the same time witnessed an expanding local program. The church may properly be said to have become both indoor and outdoor minded at this point, with the result that there is a rising revolt in many preachers' minds against what threatens to become an extreme situation. Two dangers are now facing us. First, the organized life of the church so largely preempts the resources of men and women that the service of worship gets only what is left after a week of strenuous multiple activities. Second, the preacher is in grave danger of majoring in the field of administration in order that he may keep the machinery functioning, but often to the neglect of his pulpit and spiritual ministries.

Dr. John Henry Jowett's biographer tells us that when Dr. Jowett came to New York he was amazed at the ease with which American preachers were drawn away from their studies and periods of meditation into all sorts of extra enterprises. As for himself, he bolted his study door against intruders of any kind during certain hours of each day. The American ministry cannot keep up its present organizational pace with inadequate staffs and not see the spiritual and intellectual springs run dry before its own eyes. Wise is the man who stoutly defends himself against the mechanization of his own soul. To preserve a wholesome balance between the soul and body of the modern church requires patient leadership.

● *Revolt in the Missionary Enterprise*

But far more serious than revolts against methods and mechanization is the revolt against substance itself, as for example the current revolt against the missionary enterprise. The sag in missionary interest and offerings is by no means entirely due to the economic conditions of recent years. The beginning of the sag antedates the depression. The growth of humanism and secularism, a certain attitude toward the findings of the laboratory in comparative religions, changed notions of theology and an outmoded apologetic have all greatly influenced the situation. Added to this is the effect of that school of thinkers which regards missions only as a single aspect of our cultural processes.

Unless the preacher has found his own way through this wilderness of doubt and uncertainty as to the superior value of the Christian message and ethic for all cultures he will, at best, bear weak testimony to a universal Christ and will scarcely be able to lead his people to generous giving either of substance or of life. Apart from all other considerations, the fruits of Christianity in foreign lives amply justify the enterprise. At the Student Volunteer convention recently held in our city, it is safe to say that the two most effective leaders were not of the white race. T. Z. Koo of China and Toyohiko Kagawa of Japan seemed to hold the center of the stage. Dr. Kagawa is frequently called "the world's greatest Christian." So long as such fruitage from missionary endeavor is forthcoming, missions will need no further vindication.

● *Revolt of World Forces*

Of greater significance still is the revolt of certain powerful world forces against the church. Prominent among these are competitive capitalism and growing nationalism, which now protest against any religious pronouncement which in the least challenges their supremacy or against any program which imposes the least restriction upon their assumed rights to use the church. Religious liberty, as well as free speech and a free press, is threatened as never before in our American life. The hot spot of the pulpit is no longer to be found in the field of theological controversy but in the field of social practices as taught in the Sermon on the Mount. The problem of the pulpit is, Shall the church be "domesticated" by the expanding cultures and become a handmaiden to them or shall it extricate itself from them in the interest of a religion which is "pure and undefiled"? Shall it so disentangle itself from its environing secularism, materialism, organizationalism and all the rest as to be able to bear a really robust testimony to the kind of a God revealed in Christ?

For the Hebrew prophets, there was but one alternative and that was to condemn social injustices in both state and commerce. John the Baptist sought no middle ground. Had he been content to preach a theological dogma, Herod would have passed him by unnoticed. It was his denunciation of a low domestic standard against which the governor revolted that cost him his head. Had Jesus chosen to do so he could have spent a comfortable career among the peasants of Galilee. Perhaps he might have enjoyed the privilege of free speech among the truth seekers of Greece. It is not impossible that Rome might have given him an easy berth to allay an occasional uprising among her Jewish colonists, but he chose the way of sacrifice in the interest of society. Therefore the cross.

Dr. Bowie's contention is timely when he calls for the reviving of apocalyptic preaching. To this it should be added that the church must cease defending itself and adopt an offensive and militant policy against the evils of society.

To be both outdoor and indoor minded, to adjust methods to a changing world, to preserve the kernel of our religion at the expense of the husk, to discover the historic mission and message of Christianity, to hear the still small voice above the din of wheels and cogs, and to lend a voice in the building of the Kingdom in a world of revolt rather than to be absorbed by the worldly processes of our changing civilization—these certainly furnish problems a-plenty for all the prophets of our day.

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• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

Rev. FREDERICK W. NORWOOD *has* since 1919 ministered at the famous City Temple, London, but is resigning this year that he may give his entire time to the special task of preaching and promoting world peace. For many years Dr. Norwood has traveled much, in many lands, as a prophet of the gospel of peace and brotherhood. He recently completed a year's tour of the world.

In his sixth year as pastor of the Church of the Pilgrimage, Plymouth, Mass., Rev. CARL KNUDSEN is chairman of the New England Regional Committee on Social Action of the Congregational and Christian Churches. He has contributed to various volumes of sermons edited by William H. Leach, Lewis Chrisman and others, and a few years ago published a book of his own, "Renewed by the Spirit."

Rev. NORMAN VINCENT PEALE *is one of* the younger ministers of the larger New York churches, being only 38. He is minister of the Marble Collegiate Reformed church, New York city. Formerly a Methodist, he was ordained to the ministry in 1922, and held pastorates in Berkeley, R. I., Brooklyn, N. Y., and Syracuse, N. Y. While in Brooklyn he built the membership of the Kings Highway church from 40 to 900 in three years.

*Trained for the ministry of the Meth-*odist church, Rev. M. H. LICHLITER was pastor of a number of churches of that fellowship, including charges in St. Louis, Baltimore and Cleveland. Entering the Congregational ministry in 1919, he was for five years pastor of Central church, Newton, Mass. Since 1924 he has led the activities of the great First Congregational church, Columbus, O., which was made famous by the long ministry of Washington Gladden. Dr. Lichliter preached this sermon last Easter at the Easter sunrise service of the Knights Templar of Columbus before an audience of 4,000 people.

For three years, 1915-18, Rev. BRUCE S. WRIGHT was minister of the American church in Manila, P. I. Shortly after, following a brief ministry in Albany, N. Y., he went to Asbury-Delaware Methodist church, Buffalo. He is now pastor of the Old Stone Methodist church, Meadville, Pa.

Graduating from Yale Divinity school in 1924, Rev. ROBERT MERRILL BARTLETT was on the faculty of Yenching university, Peiping, China, for three years, and while there was busily engaged also in preaching and in work among students, also in the field of religious education. In 1927 he became pastor of First Congregational church, Norwood, Mass., and after four years accepted a call to the First Church of Christ, Longmeadow, Mass., where he still ministers. Dr. Bartlett has traveled extensively, both in Europe and the Orient.

Graduating from Princeton seminary, Rev. HERBERT BOOTH SMITH was ordained in the Presbyterian ministry in 1909. He held pastorates in Rochester, N. Y., and Knoxville, Tenn., and since 1919 has led the activities of Immanuel church, one of the largest Presbyterian churches in this country.

Rev. SAMUEL HARKNESS *is minister of* the Congregational church in Winnetka, Ill., a suburb of Chicago.

Rev. WILLIAM F. ROTHENBURGER *is* pastor of Third Christian church, Indianapolis, Ind.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

CLARENCE E. MACARTNEY, First Presbyterian, Pittsburgh, Pa. "Calvary's Armistice." Col. 1:20—"Having made peace through the blood of his cross."

E. C. ELSEA, Tremont Presbyterian, New York city. "Public Question Number One." Matt. 27:22—"What will you do with Jesus who is called Christ?"

HENRY M. EDMONDS, Independent Presbyterian church, Birmingham, Ala. "Doing Something About It." Matt. 25:40—"Inasmuch as ye *did* it . . ." (Sermon preached at Chicago Sunday evening club.)

WILLARD B. THORP, First Congregational, Palo Alto, Cal. "Cherish Your Faith." Luke 8:25—"He said unto them, Where is your faith?"

GEORGE B. EDGAR, Ashbourne Presbyterian, Elkins Park, Pa. "Mr. Christian and His Money." Luke 16:11—"If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?"

EDWARD S. MORELAND, Arlington Avenue Christian, Los Angeles, Cal. "Living 'As If.'" Luke 17:21—"The Reign of God is now in your midst." (Moffatt)

ARTHUR S. COLE, First Baptist, Kingston, N. Y. "No Monopoly on Christ." Mark 1:38—"And he saith unto them, Let us go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth."

J. D. WOLCOTT, Methodist, Armstrong, Ia. "A Deep Well and No Bucket." John 4:11—"Sir, said the woman, you have nothing to draw water with, and it is a deep well: where do you get your 'living' water?" (Moffatt)

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

. . . . . .
Title of sermon

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Text used (Write out the text)

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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

The Event of the Month

AT LAST the treaty of Versailles is in shreds. Nothing is left of it save the redistribution of European territory among numerous nationalities. The reparations have lapsed; the limitation on German armament has been repudiated; and the extension of Germany's full sovereignty over the Rhineland has been reasserted by Hitler's invasion of this demilitarized zone with German troops. This last action of the fuehrer sent Europe almost into a panic of war anxiety. But the present indications are that there will be no war as the direct and immediate effect of the remilitarization of the Rhineland. Hitler's action clearly violated the Locarno treaty as well as the treaty of Versailles. And this brought about a situation which will have profound effect upon the world's confidence in the sanctions feature of the League of Nations—if indeed there was any confidence left in that feature. Twice within six months the league has faced a major test of sanctions. In the Italo-Ethiopian case, Great Britain was on the aggressive and France held back. In the Rhineland case, France takes the aggressive and calls for the application of sanctions, while England holds back. The fallacy of sanctions is again demonstrated. The truth is that they can be expected to work only in the lucky circumstances where the national interests of all the major powers are clearly on the side of action. They will not work when the interests of the major powers are divided. Never in history has mankind felt so helpless as it confronts the threat of war.

Versailles and Locarno Now Torn to Shreds

The Book of the Month

CREATIVE SOCIETY, *by John Macmurray. New York: Association Press, $1.00. Also published in pamphlet form by Sherwood Eddy and Kirby Page, 347 Madison Avenue, New York, for 15 cents.*

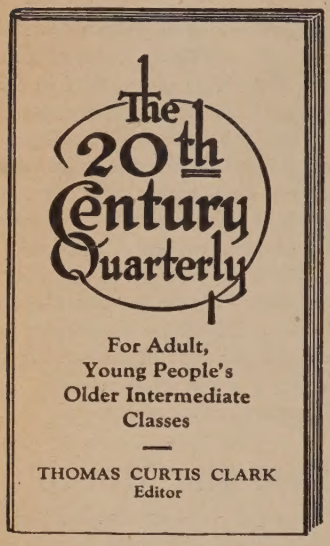
THE author is professor of philosophy in University college, London, and is, I understand, to lecture in this country soon. His book, in my judgment, is by all odds the most important interpretation of communism from the standpoint of Christianity which has yet appeared. It is wholly devoid of prejudice and conventional presuppositions. He holds that communistic atheism is the denial of a God whom Christians ought also to deny. He questions whether Christians really believe in the God whom Jesus revealed, and insists that communists have a core of faith in the true God and only think they do not. He defines the true God in realistic terms as against every form of idealism. Almost like an evangelist, he exhorts us to repudiate the philosophy of idealism and all its works. He insists that Jesus was a thoroughgoing realist who envisaged the Kingdom as emerging among the common people in a sense strikingly analogous to the proletarianism of the communists. Jesus also, in this view, appealed to class consciousness in both his teaching and his conduct, especially in the choice of his band of disciples whom he sent forth to preach to the poor and lowly, in his temptation, in his struggle with the ruling classes and in the dramatic challenge expressed in his attack on the money changers in the temple. But this book is no apologetic for communism. Rather, it uses Christianity to lay bare the insufficiency and error of communism, while it uses communism as a foil against which to reveal the pseudo-religion of traditional and conventional Christianity. We must have a more Christian type of Christianity. Jesus began with man as man. He saw the difficulty of building the Kingdom upon men whose importance is derived from their privileged positions in society. This seems to make Christianity a proletarian religion. It will do us good to think out what that means.

A Thought for the Month

HOW wide and deep is the chasm that separates our mode of thinking today from our mode of thinking only two decades ago! I remember a sermon I preached a few months before the great war in which I discussed the sense of unreality with which modern Christians read the story of the heroism and devotion of the early Christians. There was nothing in our present-day world, I had to admit, which laid upon us such demands as the hostility of Roman society laid upon them. The day of the martyrs, I said, was past, and I treated the fact as though it were a virtue! I argued that Christianity had so far permeated our western civilization that the program of Christianity from now on must consist in constructive cooperation with existing social forces—the forces of government, of business, of philanthropy, and of Christian missions (that was my outline)—in multiplying the benefits which we now enjoy under a Christian civilization! How impossible that sermon would be now! The war and the economic chaos have split wide open the whole body of our civilization and there are few among us who do not see how far from Christian, how positively hostile to Christianity, our civilization is. The Christian church now finds itself confronted by demonic principalities and powers in the totalitarian pretensions of the state, in the privileged control of the economic process by capitalism's beneficiaries, in the inevitability of war under such an economic system, in the illusion with which modern learning has deceived the human spirit, and in the false religion of pietism and philanthropy. Complacency is impossible now. Over against Christianity we see standing something which the Christian tradition calls "the world," which has no part or lot with Christianity. The heroes and martyrs of early Christianity are not so remote from our condition as we had supposed. Men and women of our generation may yet have occasion to die for their faith.

Primitive Christianity Not So Primitive

Charles Clayton Morrison



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THOMAS CURTIS CLARK
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ALBERT BUCKNER COE. Minister of the leading church in Congregationalism (First, Oak Park, Chicago). His department, "At Grips With the Lesson."

JOHN R. EWERS. Vital and dynamic minister of the East End Church of Disciples in Pittsburgh. "The Lesson Brought Down to Date" is his department.

ROY L. SMITH. Minister of the First Methodist Church of Los Angeles and widely famed for his syndicated "Sentence Sermons." His department, "Pointers."

STANLEY I. STUBER. Journalist-minded preacher, contributor to many magazines. Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Clifton Springs, N. Y. Mr. Stuber conducts "The Lesson Forum."

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